SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

7th Year – *September 24, 1973*

No 215

Address: HT 1217 B-SVN
c/o DAZIMINA HANOI
19, *Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi, DRVN*
and all RSVN Embassies, Information Bureaux in foreign countries

CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

An important event

On September 16, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam issued a communiqué saying :

ON September 15, 1973, Mr Fidel Castro Ruz, Premier of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba visited the liberated area of South Viet Nam. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Mr Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, Vice-Premier of the Cuban Revolutionary Government Secretary of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee ; Mr Osmany Cienfuegos, member of the CPC Central Committee ; Mme Melba Hernandez, President of the Cuban Committee for Solidari y with Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos; Mr Hector Rodriguez Llompart, Deputy-Chairman of the National Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Collaboration ; and Mr Raul Valdes Vivo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cuba to the Republic of South Viet Nam.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the RSVN PRG, Mr Tran Nam Trung, Vice-President of the Presidium of the SVN NFL Central Committee, RSVN Minister of Defence, warmly welcomed Premier Fidel Castro Ruz and the distinguished Cuban guests.

Present at the reception were Mr Hoang Bich Son, member of the SVN NFL Central Committee, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the RSVN PRG ; Mr Le Xich, Chairman of the NFL Committee of Quang Tri province ; Mr Le San, Chairman of the People's Revolutionary Committee of Quang Tri province, the representative of the Command of the local People's Liberation Armed Forces ; Mr Vo Anh Tuan, Ambassador of the Republic of South Viet Nam to Cuba ; and many high-ranking officials of the SVN NFL, the RSVN PRG and the people's liberation armed forces of South Viet Nam.

Premier Fidel Castro together with other Cuban guests visited Dong Ha provincial capital where he met many representatives of the local population and many heroes and valiant combatants of South Viet Nam. A meeting was held by the people in Quang Tri province to welcome the Premier and the Cuban delegation. The same day, Mr Tran Nam Trung, Vice-President of the South Viet Nam NFL Central Committee and Minister of Defence of the RSVN PRG, on behalf of the NFL CC and the RSVN PRG, offered a banquet in honour of Premier Fidel Castro and other distinguished Cuban guests.

At the meeting, Mr Tran Nam Trung made a speech warmly welcoming Premier Fidel Castro and the Cuban delegates. He expressed the South Vietnamese people's admiration for the revolutionary spirit of the heroic Cuban people in their struggle against imperialism. He highly praised the Cuban people's labour zeal and their great achievements in the building of a socialist Cuba.

He underscored the militant solidarity and wholehearted assistance of the Cuban people to the South Vietnamese people's anti-US struggle for national salvation. He particularly stressed the fact that Cuba was the first country to accept the representation of the National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam, establish diplomatic relations with the NFL and name an ambassador beside the NFL CC. Cuba was also one of the first countries to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with the RSVN PRG. Premier Fidel Castro is the first prime minister and the first leader of a friendly country to visit the liberated zone of South Viet Nam, he said.

Tran Nam Trung highly valued the significance of this historic visit and expressed the sincere thanks of the South Vietnames people to the Party, Government and fraternal people of Cuba for their very precious support and assistance.

In reply, Premier Fidel Castro paid tribute to the glorious history of the Vietnamese people's struggle against foreign aggression, for national independence and freedom. He highly commended the Vietnamese people's great victory in the resistance war against US imperialism and emphasized that the South Vietnamese people have set a brilliant example to mankind and to all nations now struggling for self-liberation.

Premier Fidel Castro pointed out that in spite of heavy setbacks, the US imperialists have not yet given up their neo-colonialist design in South Viet Nam. He expressed his belief that the South Vietnamese people will bring into play their patriotism and revolutionary heroism, and will successfully complete their great tasks in the new stage of struggle. He reaffirmed the strong and unswerving support of the Party, Government and fraternal people of Cuba to the South Vietnamese people.

The communiqué noted that the visit of Premier Fidel Castro to the liberated zone in South Viet Nam was a very important event and a strong encouragement to the South Vietnamese people who are resolutely struggling for strict implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam to maintain and consolidate peace, achieve independence and democracy, improve their living conditions, and achieve national reconciliation and concord with a view to building a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic and prosperous South Viet Nam, and advancing to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland.

Premier Fidel Castro speaking at a rally in Quang Tri

Jean P. Debris and André Menras, victims and eyewitnesses of Saigon penitentiary regime

DECEIVING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Public opinion in the world — the USA included — has urged continuously and vigorously the American government to assume its responsibility with regard to the question of political prisoners, and Nguyen Van Thieu to return immediately all prisoners, put an end to inhuman treatment towards patriots and peace advocates now being detained by him.

Driven to the wall, the US government and the Nguyen Van Thieu administration have been striving hard to lie and deceive world opinion.

American journalist Don Luce, author of numerous articles indicting the US — Thieu penitentiary regime, has just put out a document entitled Deceiving the American people *in reply to deceitful assertions by the State Department and the Saigon administration regarding the issue of political prisoners in South Viet Nam. We publish hereunder the said document* — Ed.

NUMEROUS documented reports in US newspapers and on television have aroused public opinion about South Viet Nam's civilian political prisoners. Many Americans, appalled about how their tax money is being used, have written to the Saigon embassy, the US State Department and Congress.

As a result of the growing public pressure and increasingly insistent Congressional inquiries, the Saigon government has taken a series of minor but well-publicized steps to try to defuse the political prisoner issue. For example, after five years of imprisonment, the runner-up in South Viet Nam's 1967 presidential elections, Truong Dinh Dzu, was released (just before Thieu's trip to the United States). In addition, due to growing concern in the International Catholic Community (including Pope Paul VI), five catholic priests in Saigon who were sentenced to imprisonment for opposition to Thieu's policies, have never been jailed.

But the overall situation remains unchanged. Along with these few cosmetic efforts, the lies and half-truths continue to flow from US and South Vietnamese officials. Following are some examples of the false and misleading statements used to cover up both what is happening in Saigon's jails and how American tax money is being used.

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"Article 4 of the (peace) Agreement which says that the United States will not 'intervene in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam' precludes us from compelling President Thieu to 'guarantee' democratic liberties..."

Laurin B. Askew, Dept. of State
Washington, DC, March 13, 1973

DON LUCE

The United States funds 90% of the Saigon government's costs. The US continues to provide the bombs, ammunition and other war materiel that are used by the Saigon army and American taxpayers still pay for the operation of the prisons and the Saigon police that arrest Vietnamese citizens. Thus, not only do we permit the Saigon government to mistreat their own citizens, we assume the cots for it. Our government is condoning the torture of Vietnamese by its silence, while at the same time it is lying to both the American people and Congress about what is really happening.

Askew's legal reasoning is subtle but misleading. Article 11 of the same agreement guarantees democratic liberties for the South Vietnamese people. The US pledged itself to the fulfillment of this provision in the original peace agreement and reaffirmed its commitment in the June 13 Paris Communiqué. The virtually total financial dependence of Thieu's government on the United States makes talk of non-intervention hypocritical. Moreover, a double-standard is revealed by US threats to bomb North Viet Nam for non-compliance with the agreement while refusing to take even the small step of controlling the use of its own funds to assure Saigon's compliance.

"At present, US support to the South Vietnamese police force is confined to commodity assistance on a one-for-one replacement basis and support for police training outside Viet Nam".

Marshal Wright, Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations Department of State, April 23, 1973 (letter to Senator Lawton Chiles)

DON LUCE

In fact, millions of dollars have been budgeted for police activities in South Viet Nam for financial year 1974. "We found", Senator Edward Kennedy said, "that public safety is now called technical support, public administration and public works... they total some 15, 217,000 dollars for public safety purposes in South Viet Nam — and presumably there is more buried elsewhere — including the American piaster support for Saigon's national budget... On February 21, for example, the US embassy in Saigon obligated piasters valued at more than 100.000 dollars for prison support."

Matthew J. Harvey, Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs of Aid (Agency for International Development), wrote to one US Congressman on June 12, 1973, that 9,3 million dollars of this is Department of Defense money "for the national police to replace worn-out equipment". That's a lot of replacement - especially considering the fact that there are another six million dollars spent on public safety from other US sources.

Concealing US involvement in public safety has often been a matter of omission. For example, Robert Nooter, an Assistant administrator in the Agency for International Development, wrote Susan Sickler of Chevy Chase, Maryland on March 16, 1973, that the public safety directorate of CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) had been dissolved and had no further role in South Viet Nam. What Mr Nooter did not mention was that many of the activities were just transferred to aid. The administrator for AID, John Hannah, clarified what actually happened in a letter to a Congressman two months later:

"The CORDS public safety office has been disbanded and its residual civilian elements including the telecommunications project, were transferred to the USAID in Saigon."

"Participant training at the international police academy in Washington, D.C. is expected to continue", Hannah said. Vietnamese claim that this participant training encourages mistreatment in the jails. On May 5, 1973 a delegation from Women Strike for Peace visited the international police academy. While in the library they saw the thesis by Vietnamese national policemam, Nguyen Huy Thong, in which he wrote that threats and violence against prisoners being interrogated were sometimes a necessity.

"It is inaccurate to say that US funds have been used to still political dissent in Viet Nam."

Marshall Wright, Acting Assistant secretary for Congressional Relations Department of State, March 5, April 11, April 23, 1973 (Letters to Congressman William Broomfield, Senator Adlai Stevenson and Senator Lawton Chiles).

DON LUCE

Yet in reporting on the effectiveness of American aid to the Saigon police force. John Morsler, Director of USAID in Viet Nam wrote on January 1, 1971 in report to the ambassador;

"During 1970 the police continued to improve their capability in traditional police functions. Their timely and positive action effectively contained civil disturbances involving war veterans, students and religious groups, thereby preventing the spread of violence."

American funds have paid for a variety of other police projects and materiel. Tear gas, made in Saltsburg, Pennsylvania, is part of American aid, and it is used primarily against non-violent demonstrations by Buddhists, students and workers. The salaries of the police that arrested the runner-up in the 1967 presidential elections and national assemblyman Tran Ngoc Chau were paid for by the United States. The identity cards, designed to show whether Vietnamese citizens voted or not, were designed with the help of US advisors and printed with US money. As of June, 1972, 9,068,811 identity cards had been issued as well as 502,000 biodata documents and 3.1 million dossiers. All this was paid for by American tax dollars.

The public safety directorate (mentioned in the preceding section) provided conventional and paramilitary police training for Thieu's field police. "During 1971, the field police conducted 27, 788 operations against subversive elements... the force expanded patrols in rural areas, and detained 33,558 persons for non-Viet Cong related offenses."

(To be continued)

Saigon students jailed by Thieu

STEP UP THE FIGHT FOR LIBERATION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS !

LET us recall — lest some amongst us forget it — that the signing of the Paris Agreement was greeted with tears of joy in the United States as well in Viet Nam by wives and mothers who, in spite of difference of skin colours, had been experiencing the same suffering. Hostilities were about to cease and families were going to celebrate the home-coming of a beloved husband or son.

There should be no ambiguity in the stipulations of the Agreement and the relating Protocol. The return of captured military personnel of the parties shall be carried out simultaneously with and completed not later than the withdrawal of US and allied troops (Article 8 of the Agreement). The question of the return of the Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Viet Nam will be resolved on the basis of the principles of Article 21-b of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Viet Nam of July 20, 1954. This Article 21-b is reproduced in Article 7-a of the Protocol concerning the Return of Captured Personnel: "The term 'civilian internees' is understood to mean all persons who, having in any way contributed to the political and armed struggle between the two parties, have been arrested for that reason and have been kept in detention by either party during the period of hostilities." In the conditions of the resistance war against US aggression, the "civilian internees" include not only the civilian cadres and militants of the NFL and the PRG, but also members of the Third Force, called "soldiers of peace" by J.P. Debris and A. Menras in their famous brochure: "Survivors of Saigon jails accuse".

Now eight months have elapsed since the signing of the Paris Agreement and three months and a half since that of the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué.

All the American boys have been back to their homes and some of them persecuted by this same Nixon administration which shed so many crocodile tears on their captivity. Vietnamese political detainees are still however held up in US-Thieu jails, except some hundred who owed their liberation to the action of the Vietnamese people and public opinion in the world and the United States. Thieu — this zealous agent and semi-official spokesman of US imperialism — is still sticking to his ignominious allegation on the non-existence of political prisoners, which elicited a hunger strike by Mme Ngo Ba Thanh, a lawyer and outstanding figure of the Third Force.

Both local and foreign sources have referred to the figure of 200,000 political prisoners, including tens of thousands of patriots and peace partisans newly arrested after January 28, 1973, by the US and Thieu.

The US-Thieu prison regime was infernal. Tiger cages revealed by the courageous Don Luce were only one among the death means used by torturers against political detainees. Frightened by the prospect of having to set them free, the Saigon administration preferred to resort to more expeditious methods, such as secret physical liquidation or open collective murder, under fallacious pretexts including attempts to escape or rebellion. According to a new Don Luce document based on US data, the Nixon administration is by no means unacquainted with these new crimes which it helped finance and program.

The "South Vietnamese Committee of Struggle for the Liberation of Detained Patriots and Peace Partisans" issued on July 22, 1973 a pressing appeal to all friends of the Vietnamese people urging them to act without delay for the liberation of more than 200,000 detainees, whether they are "captured Vietnamese personnel" or members of the Third Political Force.

The "Committee of Action of Vietnamese Intellectuals against the Policy of Terror of the Saigon administration, to ensure Respect for and Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam" just issued on August 31, 1973 a letter to intellectuals and personalities over the world to inform them that the life of hundreds of thousands of political prisoners is being endangered and to request them to undertake all urgent actions in their favour.

The Vietnamese people and all peace- and justice-loving peoples the world over are confronted with a revolting injustice and a real challenge by the Saigon administration backed and encouraged by the US imperialists. These perjuries trample underfoot not only paragraphs a and c of Acticle 8 of the Paris Agreement, but also paragraph b of Article 8 of the Protocol concerning the Return of Captured Personnel, which stipulates that "All Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Viet Nam shall be treated humanely at all times, and in accordance with international practice. They shall be protected against all violence to life and person, in particular against murder in any form, mutilation, torture and cruel treatment, and outrages against personal dignity."

In the Thieu-controlled zone, an inhumane and homicide treatment continues to be inflicted upon hundreds of thousands defenceless human beings under cover of a "peace" in which cannons keep on thundering and planes pouring their death cargoes.

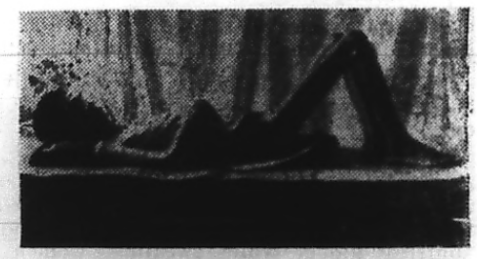
A genocide — since this should be called by its name — is being committed.

To keep silent and stay indifferent in face of such a situation is tantamount to tolerating this crime and becoming accomplice to it.

We therefore deem it our duty to call on all our compatriots and on all men and women of good will and especially on our colleagues journalists of the five continents to drive forward, by a series of urgent combined actions, the fight for the liberation of political detainees, victims of US-Thieu treason in South Viet Nam.

Our common struggle for this highly just cause is a struggle for justice and law, for humanism and civilization. It will certainly carry the day.

Immediate freedom for our brothers — the South Vietnamese political detainees !



Survivors from Poulo Condor jail

Peace soldiers

At the 10th World Youth and Students Festival, in Berlin, **J.P. Debris** and **A. Menras** offered to a member of the South Vietnamese delegation a copy of their book: *Rescapés des bagnes de Saigon. Nous accusons*, with a dedication in Vietnamese as follows: "As a token of the indefectible solidarity between the Vietnamese people and the French people, with our promise to continue to denounce to international opinion the war crimes of the American imperialists and their henchmen, and especially the most cruel penitentiary regime established by the US in South Viet Nam and so, until the last political prisoner be released."

It is useless to praise the two French "cooperants" who had never made politics and strongly took the Vietnamese people's cause, once moved by the South Vietnamese realities. They showed an heroic behaviour two years and a half long in Saigon prison and are widely known as two faithful friends of Viet Nam. However, it belongs to us, in sending them a fraternal greeting, to borrow a lesson from their strong optimism and their wise evaluation of the part of public opinion in the struggle for the political detainees in South Viet Nam. "Every of us — Debris and Menras wrote in conclusion of their book — may be efficacious. Every article denouncing tortures has allowed a breathing-space to the detainees. We have verified ourselves that fact in Chi Hoa prison. Now tens of thousands men, women and children, Vietnamese patriots are under the threat of death in the days and weeks to come. Their fate depends not solely on the international Commissions, but equally on the world peoples' responsibility. Their life lies with us, with all of us."

We below reprinted an excerpt from Debris and Menras book, entitled *Soldiers of peace*, speaking of the Vietnamese intellectuals detained at Chi Hoa, including a woman jurist, Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh — *Ed.*

UP to late 1971, at Chi Hoa prison, we had only met NFL cadres and fighters, patriots, mostly peasants. From October 1971 onwards when the so-called presidential elections were held with General Thieu as the sole candidate, there took place a first wave of arrests against students demonstrating in the towns against that electoral farce. When the NFL's offensive started in March 1972, a second wave of arrests swelled the Chi Hoa prison population. The new-arrivals included jurists like Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh, a former graduate of Strasbourg University and an American university, barristers like our own counsel, Nguyen Long, professors, intellectuals, students, like Huynh Tan Mam, chairman of the General Association of Vietnamese Students, Catholic students, Buddhist monks — in short a whole category of detainees we had not usually met in prisons. For instance, Thieu Son, writer and journalist, the editorial writer of Dan Chu moi *(New Democracy). This paper was afterwards strangled like many others by Thieu's latest decree against the press (requiring from all journals 20 million piasters in guarantee money, to be deposited at the Censor's Office, which at each "infraction" would deduct the fines from it and could even confiscate the printing equipment).*

Those intellectuals, those people, belonged to the urban bourgeoisie of South Viet Nam. They had discovered much later than their compatriots in the countryside the atrocities and realities of this war. From 1968 onwards they had set up "legal" movements for peace and the withdrawal of US troops. They did not hide, and thought they could act legally. There were for instance the Movement for the Vietnamese people's Right to Self-Determination a co-chairman of which was Nguyen Long; and the Women's Movement for the Right to Live, the Movement for Better Conditions in South Viet Nam's Gaols with Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh as chairman. There were student movements whose initial aim was only to demand US troop withdrawal, but which gradually grew in aggressiveness after experiencing bloody repression by Thieu's police. For instance this famous Dot Xe My *(burns US cars) wave of action in which fire was set to US vehicles not painted with a broken M.16 gun as a pacifist sign. This was proof that the students were sick of US occupation.*

(Continued on page 5)

Wife and husband prisoners

A person was jailed by the US-Thieu. Could she *or* he *have any chance to get out and see the sunshine again? In this case in point, both wife and husband were framed up. For grave charges: opposition to the regime, offence to public security, murder of Thieu's officials and officers...*

I've met these two prisoners: wife and husband. They both have come back to the daylight after endless fatal tortures. Following is their story. Not the story of two persons only, but of a whole family living next-door to Saigon city.

THAT poor and numerous family lived in a "strategic hamlet" of S. village, near National Route 1 and noisy T. airfield. They loved one another and no foul words were heard among them.

The wife, slender and gentle, toiled hard to raise three little children and take care of her husband's old mother. In 1968, it was the third time her husband was arrested, then detained in Phu Quoc island jail. They wouldn't likely set him free. At home, his wife would hurry to the market and come back with rice amidst a mess of bottles and pots: she had a living by making rice-wine the residues of which were to feed the pig.

Leaning on her bamboo stick, her husband's aged mother would return from her stroll all about and shout: "Where is little Hung, little Dao? Busy with stoning Yankee cars with other kids, sure! You'll be caught some day, you crazy little ones!"

Then turning towards her grand daughter who was about to go to school: "And you, Thuy, have you helped your mother feed the pig?" she asked reproachfully.

But she at once would soften her voice (the tenderness of Granny for her grand daughter):

"Well, the neighbours have just given us a basket of sweet potatoes. Boil them for the little ones."

Outside, the sun rose high and the areka tree cast a shadow on the big jar of water spotted with areka flowers. Route Nº 1 was humming with dense traffic of military cars. Lambretta motor-bikes shuttled along, while sweating women market-gardeners carried on their shoulders the green load swinging at both ends of a bamboo pole. Now and then, a jet screeched past, a chopper coming from the north lowered down.

Suddenly, little Hung, in pants, rushed in, sounding the alarm:

— "Mum! Granny! Cat's coming along with his men!"

Footsteps were heard, and Captain Cat with a brightening face, sedately stepped in. Three brand-new apricot flowers* were pinned on the lapel of his uniform, a pistol hanging loose from his waist-belt. He greeted the old lady with a word and went straight to the rear of the house:

— "Hullo, sister Muoi! Getting fine? Heard from your husband? Or has he left his body on the island?"

The woman looked up at the officer's ladies-man's contented face and kept silent. A notorious sanguinary thug, he was responsible for the safety belt of the airfield. His people's self-defence men armed with heavy machine-guns would frantically fire rounds throughout the night, if they scented something in the wind. In addition, a whole para brigade was positioned near Ba Queo township. But still more dangerous were scores of debauched women or those, raped enticed by him, or forced to marry him, scattered all about the village for intelligence. The villagers were ruthlessly coerced and exploited. But he was a sly dog: part of his profits generously went to his underlings or was spent to recruit more acolytes. To make away with him has for long years been our concern. An old fox, he constantly altered his whereabouts. Now he would ride on his Vespa motor-bike to Saigon, then to the heavily-guarded airfield nearby to spend his nights. It was no easy work to lay ambush or mount a surprise attack...

— "Well, have some of these liberation gentlemen come up here these last days, dear sister?" Captain Cat asked in a honey voice, patting his pistol's holster.

— "How can they? Post inside, post outside, military police's round-the-clock patrol on Route 1, and so many ears and eyes of yours in this village," the woman replied weighing each of her words.

Flattered to the point, Cat burst out laughing:

— "Oh, yes! yes! I've just something of a "playboy's" good manner and those girls have a liking for me." Suddenly, changing his tone, and glancing at the room inside, he put it squarely: "But I'm no fool to be taken in by you, ladies and gentlemen! Who have pulled down fences and barbed wire these last years? You, ladies and gentlemen, have a hand in it. And the guys of the police killed in cold blood last year? None other than you ladies and gentlemen who let these "armed" gentlemen in to do the job. Then in 1965, the airfield was stormed for the first time: planes, gasoline storage, bomb dump exploded the whole day. Where did the "*dac cong*" (1) team hide its men if not here, here...?"

SHE was arrested.

Five months quickly elapsed since then. That morning, the Saigon military court sentenced her to thirty two years of imprisonment in all: first, two years in jail, then charged with riot in Thu Duc prison: twenty years of hard labour and ten years of deportation. "How strange that hearing!" she said to herself lying on the floor. All around her, female inmates were sleeping, some of them shrieking at times in their nightmares. Magistrates and "audience", all clad in uniforms. Up there around a long table, six or seven of them were assembled, the fellow in the middle sitting higher than the remainder, wearing more apricot flowers than his confederates.

From 9 a.m. to 12, some twenty persons were tried altogether. But she stood alone in her case. Charges, judgment and verdict were read out at a devilish speed. All kinds of functions were put on her: member of the Saigon — Gia Dinh and precinct 8 Financial-Economic Committee, member of the district Party Committee, so on and so forth. Curling up her upper lip, she kept protesting.

— "Function or rank is of no importance," they concluded, "the point is that you've killed the airfield's officer..."

Cat? He since long deserved death penalty. Since the Yanks flowed in, he's set out to lick their boots and kiss greenbacks. He himself led his men to pull down the villagers' huts and flatten their orchards. The airfield got inflated like a hydrogen balloon, swallowing up paddies and gardens, its outer fence reaching even Route 1.

I secretly brought our men in, busy day and night as I was with digging the underground inside my home. Eyelids dropping with sleep, hands blistered. Chores tread-mill in day time just to show that things were proceeding as usual. Yet, Lan — Cat's girl informer — nosed it and worried me a lot.

Wearing a pink nylon low-necked jacket she stepped in with an empty bottle allegedly to buy rice wine and treat her uncle who had come down from Saigon. But her sharp eyes didn't cease glancing at all the corners of the house.

— "How tired you look these days, sister Muoi!" What's the matter with you?" she inquired.

— "Well, you know, my husband is framed up far away, my mother getting older and older... my children still young and good to nothing, how can I go the pace as gaily and leisurely as you do...," I answered mildly but pointedly.

Lan felt it and stood up abruptly:

— "I just want to know how you're..." She paused then clearing her voice, made a clever probe: "These last days it seems that something is brewing, isn't it?"

— "You're single and get plenty of time to go all around day and night, and know much more things than I do..."

Lan once off, I couldn't keep quiet. Has the girl scented something? Has she run into somebody carrying the earth away? Or fallen in with some acquaintance coming from over there?

No, no, she knew nothing at all, otherwise many things would have happened. Oh! Those nights! Digging, digging and digging undergrounds to shelter our men for the liquidation of cruel tyrants! Three, four nights running, not a single wink of sleep: all my body was a ball of wool. Each basket-load of earth weighed heavier than the previous one. Sleep was hovering about, yet nobody thought of having a break. Everyone toiled like hell, minding not to make a noise. The one stood guard, the other dug or carried away the earth on his head to drop it into the pond and wipe out all traces.

— "Have you pondered it over and over? Either we succeed or fail, *you* and *you alone* will be exposed, you know," the team leader whispered to her ears.

— "Why are you asking such a question?" the woman reacted, her upper lip curling up defiantly, "we'll have to kill Cat at any cost, otherwise the movement would have little chance to gain. Now, you've just told me of my family. My husband is still in jail, I must think of taking my revenge to be worthy of him. Should all my family be in danger, arrested or killed, we'd never step back!"

Oh! How splendid! Cat, on his way home, bounced and fell across the road, after an A.K. round, ending his life of a blood-thirsty scoundrel!

But they irrupted in as I was busy making rice wine as usual. Lan was the first to show up, casting stealthy and fearful glances.

— "You, slut, how dare you come in this house again?" I looked at her squarely in the eye and had just the time to spit it at her. She wilted and bent her head. But an empty underground was hit by one of their long pointed iron sticks. They stormed in, ten then twenty of them, and in no time, the secret galleries got wide open, newly-dug and still warm with human presence. Our men have just the time to move away, she said to herself.

She also thought of covering her husband's mother.

— "Mum, if these days, I've done something wrong, please forgive me. I dared not tell you about it," she said to the old lady.

Kicked, beaten, she was whisked off at the point of cold and sharp bayonets.

But she only knew too well: her aged mother-in law was not the one to give it up easily. In 1955, she came out against Ngo Dinh Diem's referendum. In 1959, her son was slapped in his face by a policeman amidst the excited crowd of anti-draft youngsters. The old lady sprang up to protect her son and slapped back in the pig's face.

She has a hand in liquidating Cat and punishing other sanguinary agents. She did all her jobs most discreetly. Leaning on her bamboo stick, she used to loiter all around. Nothing could escape her attention. After a poor battle where the enemy could run away, she would have this to say: "I've reared a pig to feat you, sonnies. But six, and seven of you weren't able to kill it. What a shame! So, no eating, no drinking at all!"

A successful fight would make her call out: "Boys, take away the pig (though it's her only pig) for your entertainment. I give it to you!"

The kid — Hung — has also had his share in disposing of Cat. Hardly was he sent for intelligence than he ran back radiant with joy: "He's coming! It's Cat!..."

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* *Grades in Thieu's army.*

(1) *Unit specializing in demolition work.*

OH ! my dear ! I'm worthy of you, though I only make rice wine, raise the pig, take care of the children and mum. When they tortured me, I told them :

— "My mother ? that aged woman who will linger about all the day long with her stick. An inveterate gambler too. As for my children, they spend all their time playing on the road and don't care helping me a bit..."

They clubbed my head, kicked my temples with pointed shoes. I fainted. They poured water to make me come to, only to beat me up again till I lost consciousness. Sure, I'm going to die, I said to myself. Well, how death looks like ? An endless sleep probably, and it would be better. Never can they get a single word out of me. I took every charge for myself. None other than I helped the liberation men in to kill Cat,

— "Keeping a look-out ?" — "Me"

— "Digging undergrounds ?" — "Me."

— "How could you do it yourself ?" — "I dug day and night, little by little and for months."

— "Who knows all this ?" — "Nobody".

— "These "chaps" from outside, who are they ? — "I can't see them in the dark..."

Punching, kicking, hanging me up, water-questioning me again...

At mid-night, my arms tied up behind my back, I was thrown into a dark corner.

— "You, stubborn bitch, you won't speak out. We'll shoot you dead ! Shut up your eyes !"

Noisy breech-loading. Darling, can you imagine it, I smiled in the complete dark : "They're just cowing me. How can they "execute" me after failing to get a confession out of me."

I laughed again. They probably heard it and dropped the "curtain" earlier.

— A real die-hard, this girl. Let's take her back to water questioning ! ! !

They carried me in, struck me down on a bench, forced soapy water into my mouth and trampled upon my stomach. I fainted.

At present, I've regained full consciousness. I'm thinking of you. Your face is pock marked, but it's more handsome than any clean and perfumed faces of theirs. Your kindness and fidelity is boundless. You had been a messenger in the 9-year first resistance. In 1954, after the return of peace, you came back weak and sick to our home village. I loved you. In those days, I was an easily-blushing little girl. We, poor people in the vicinity of Saigon, we all think of a bright future brought about by the revolution, even while the city is swarming with the enemy's gloomy uniforms, bristling will all kinds of guns, humming everywhere with Black Marias, even when base passions of a few keep proliferating in the mostley of neonlights with US dollars' blessing.

We had our first child ;

We had our second child ;

We had our third child...

All amidst repression and suffering. For months and years much more sorrows and anguishes than joy and happineses. You're arrested for the first time, for the second time, for the third time.

Together with people living in utter misery, but loyal soul and body to the revolution, you had done your bit in levelling strategic hamlets and making this village of ours a spring-board to attack the airfield I still remember 1968, the year when you're arrested for the third time. I went five times to Phu Quoc island to see you. The first time, I was in such a rush, you know. The whole village collected money and I took the plane. From Duong Dong village, the aircraft flew straight to Phu Quoc, but I noticed nothing. The other times I went on board of a ship from Rach Gia. There were heaps of applications to visit male detainees. I'd to wait endlessly. The fourth time I saw you, you're so feeble that two of your inmates had to help you walk out. Tears rolled down my cheeks. The fifth time — after that I went back, planned the killing of Cat and was caught — I still remember it too well.

Housed a dozen days by the people on the island, and listening to the waves and gunshots, and waiting night after night all the time, full of anguish, I could'nt have a wink of sleep. How many wives went back forlorn, alone with their children : their husbands' names were not on the list of the survivors. Then one day, the Phu Quoc jail superintendents called me up and allowed me in. Oh, it's just like flags fluttering before me. Together with our little Dao, I stepped in the wards sector my hands encumbered with quantity of parcels. The *Chieu Hoi* rallied detainees were permitted to sit side by side with their wives. As for you and me — and other unyielding prisoners — we're set apart by two rows of barbed wire between which the military police stood guard, one man every two-meters.

I handed to you the *Thiet Quan Am* tins of tea, two kilos of sugar, a few packages of *re trang* strong brown tobacco and a bundle of linen. They proceeded to a close search of everything, got everything untied, open, and scanned each chain-stitch of the clothes...

I shouted at the top of my voice — the encounter lasted barely ten minutes :

— "Have you good appetite ? How are you ?"

Piercing shrieks, cheeks wet with tears all around me :

— "How are the little ones ?"

— "How is the trade getting on ? Do take care of yourself !"...

A woman suddenly burst out sobbing, covering her face with both hands. It seemed that none could hear the other. Between the two rows of barbed wire, the MP went up and down, their guns at the ready. At last, we could make for a quiet corner away from the pandemonium.

— "I'm fine, don't worry, dear !" you said. "What ! Little Dao, how awfully she's grown up ! She looks out of sorts, doesn't she ? Mind she isn't being bullied..."

DRY-eyed Dao looked at her dad in the face for a while, then let out these words :

— "Don't worry, "Sir," — how strange, the little lass calls her dad "Sir !" — I did know each time you secretly returned home, mum brought meals to you inside the room, "Sir," yet she sent me away..."

Listening to her, tears came to my eyes. Now both dad and mum are arrested and jailed. I wonder whether granny and grand children can or can't earn their living even sparely...

IN the Thu Duc jail, all the time she laid virtually motionless. The wounds, specially at the temples due to kicks with pointed shoes, got swollen and made her head ache terribly. Coughing would provoke unbearable pains. Her inmates had her hair cut as she couldn't stand up or have a wash. Hardly two months later, was she able to sit up and try to make a few paces with a stick.

All the night long, she would think of her small native hamlet where poor labouring people and miserable petty vendors farm tiny plots of land to grow vegetable and feed on it daily. In 1961, the enemy razed down the village : the inhabitants were evicted into strategic hamlets. Exposed to burning sunshine the children fell ill. The Yankees came up, threw their money out of the windows ; night clubs, snack-bars mushroomed and behind the cashier's desks excessively powdered and painted faces of depraved girls fond of US dollars were seen. The little hamlet was disturbed throughout the night by the break of glasses and bottles and strings of hysterical laughters, secret agents streamed in, group after group, haughtily levelling their dark glasses at all corners in search of the least sign of opposition activities. But almost at the same time, certain lonely Yanks suddenly faded from sight together with a number of sanguinary thugs. The adversary ran mad, but the hamlet, like a perseverent toiling woman, would pull down each night a portion of the barbed wire fence that penned her up ; the guerillas would hold on, get a close watch and suddenly appear, hurl grenades and open up at the enemy...

AT present, I'm sitting in front of a woman, her upper lip curled up as if out of spite, her hair like a schools-girl's falling gracefully upon her shoulders (her husband is just out to water the bed of vegetable grown by himself and his wife to "improve" their meals.) — "Brother," she softly confided to me, "after they set me free, I searched for my husband, wondering whether he is still alive or not. I checked the lists, his name wasn't there. I fell ill again, and was again brought to the hospital. My head struck by sticks, and my temples hit by pointed shoes from a distance — to break me down mentally and get someone's name out of me — made me feel like a swarm of bees humming in my head, and provoked unbearable pains. It's a real luck I succumbed in a short time. They carried me to the hospital then to the police. Was I handed over to the army which would avenge Cat, I would since long have been killed.

It's a joy to be released. But how could I enjoy it to the full ? No news from my husband ; my children and mother-in-law are still overthere, my husband's brother arrested at the same time with him, and later secretly killed...

But my husband was first to get news about me, as he had been returned before me.

At the welcoming centre, he walked out, trembling, and hugged me. He had returned from Phu Quoc island. I..., am I really me ? Is it reality or dream ? The rainbow before my eyes keeps dazzling and turning, turning with a terrific increasing velocity. I fainted again.

T. N.

Peace soldiers

(Continued from page 3)

We repeat it : all those movements were quite legal and operated in broad daylight. What indeed could their promoters fear ? After all, they only wanted peace. But nowadays in South Viet Nam—"free" South Viet Nam as described by US propaganda—to speak is considered a crime. We were told by our co-detainees : "At Nuremberg, war criminals (chiên pham) were tried. In South Viet Nam, "peace criminals' (hoa pham) are now now being arrested and sentenced." Suffice it to listen to Thieu's speeches in which he proclaimed : "This is my order : anyone daring to speak of peace with the communists is to be shot dead on the spot. "Thieu was quick to understand that the peace movements would snow-ball. Through them those intel'ectuals, lawyers, students, were able to tell peace fighters from war-mongers. They gradually realized that the path to peace passed through US troops withdrawal. Arrested in March 1972, all those townsfolk underwent the same tortures as had been inflicted on NFL cadres for tens of years. Sprung from the well to-do bourgeoisie, not inured to such ill-treatments, they all suffered greatly. Most were deeply marked by the tortures. Now, those lawyers, intellectuals, Catholic students and also Catholic priests like Father Chan Tin, those Buddhist monks who would not let themselves be drafted—they could obviously not be labelled as Communists. They are men and women widely known in the Saigon high bourgeoisie. Their relation of what they themselves experienced and personnaly witnessed in prison, their accounts of tortures and living conditions, etc., will be believed. It is thus a question of survival for the Thieu regime to get rid of such people especially.

Broken but unvanquished.

Besides all these political prisoners remained unvanquished in spite of tortures. And if it sometimes happens to their bodies be to broken, their spirit of resistance is out of reach. We have seen some detainees who have spent nineteen years in tiger-cages and yet remain faithful to their revolutionary and patriotic ideal. These men and women who represent the Vietnamese elite, sprung from atrocious struggles, at the cost of unbelievable sufferings, shall be called to play an extensive role in the political combat following the cease-fire.

Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh and relatives of political prisoners

For these two reasons, one easily understands why Thieu refuses to liberate all these prisonners and even has begun to exterminate them, a short time before our expulsion.

Now these prisoners are more than ever threatened. We have no newns about a great nnmber of students. They began to disappear from December, the tenth. For instance, a student named Nguyen Duy Thong, with whom we have been well acquainted but did not see again before our departure. We don't know where he is and are are asking after Thieu : "Where's he ?"

FIDEL CASTRO ON VISIT TO VIET NAM

In the liberated zone of South Viet Nam

THE FUTURE OF VIET NAM IS AS RESPLENDENT AS THE SUNRAYS WELCOMING US THIS MORNING

THE motorcade of the Cuban Communist Party and Cuban Revolutionary Government delegation arrived at dawn in the liberated area of Quang Tri province.

The reception was simple but affectionate. In his liberation fighter's uniform, Mr Tran Nam Trung gave a long hug to Premier Fidel Castro. South Vietnamese combatants and civilians rushed in, with tokens of their most affectionate sentiments for the Cuban guests, the comrades-in-arms sharing the same fighting trench. After alighting on the soil of heroic South Viet Nam, the Cuban Premier took a long gaze at the yellow starred red-blue flag fluttering in the wind.

In his drive with Mr Tran Nam Trung, Fidel Castro's attention was drawn by the many scars left by the atrocious war, bearing witness to the heinous crimes and also the bitter failure of the US imperialists.

What he saw in his trip was innumerable bomb and shell craters, ploughed up or flattened villages and hamlets, derelict concentration camps lying on bald hill tops, reinforced concrete fortifications ripped open, shell cases of all calibers littering the ground, wrecked enemy tanks scattered on the hillsides and ricefields.

He then stopped to inspect a cemetery of American-made tanks and armoured cars collected by the Liberation fighters during the illegal attack of the Saigon troops on Cua Viet port.

Many times, he got out of his car to survey the terrain, examine the traces on the former battlefield and talk to people.

Walking in the streets of Dong Ha, the re-construction of which was in full swing, he was told by Mr Tran Phuong Thac, Chairman of the town administrative committee of the havoc wrought by B.52 raids for days on end and also of the rehabilitation plan of that provincial capital of Quang Tri. On that land still strewn with enemy hardware and unexploded bombs and mines, the Cuban Premier and his party already saw the seeds of life: new roofs just put up, tractors rumbling on the fields of Gio Linh, irrigation ditches already dug and fruit-gardens regaining their greenness. "A new life has been sprouting from the ruins caused by the war," said Mr Tran Nam Trung to Premier Fidel Castro.

On the McNamara electronic fence

It was on the roof of a reinforced concrete blokhouse surrounded by several metres thick layer of sandbags of Tan Lam base, one of enemy strongest points d'appui in North Quang Tri that Fidel Castro met and affectionaly hugged South Vietnamese heroes and heroines coming from various battlefields to welcome him: Ta Thi Kieu from Nam Bo, Phan Hanh Son from Trung Bo, Ho Duc and Ho Soi from Tri Thien.

There he listened keenly to the briefing of the commander of the Tri Thien army unit on the military situation in his secton. The commander of the Khe Sanh unit gave an account of typical battles fought by his unit, including the siege of the very Tan Lam base.

The distinguished guest inspected the solid dug-out of the commander of a Saigon regiment, a 175mm gun nicknamed "King of the battlefield" lying inert on the roadside.

He also saw portable "tiger cages" imported from the US with the inscription: "US Army."

After the first smashing attacks in which Tan Lam base virtually fell into the hands of the Liberation troops, all the Saigon garrisons mutinied and crossed over to the people's side.

At Doc Mieu base, from which the enemy had usually lobbed shells on the northern bank of the Ben Hai river, Mr Manh Thoa, commanding the Quang Tri armed forces supplied a description of the widely known McNamara electronic fence and its ineffectiveness. It was there that during the war the guerillas of the neighbouring villages had encircled and harassed the enemy soldiers day and night so much that none of them dared to leave their stronghold, and as a result the McNamara electronic barrier became useless.

Doc Mieu was also the assembly point of Quang Tri armed forces coming in full rig to cheer Premier Fidel Castro. A girl guerilla stood in the middle. In front of the formation was heroic Battalion 8 under Le Van Vu who had swum across the Thach Han river over one hundred times within the enemy shooting range to give instructions and bring supply to his unit.

Premier Fidel Castro was all smiles as he listened to stories obout the anti-US resistance, on top of a fortification built by the Americans: "Each victory won by the Vietnamese people is ours," he mused.

Holding high the Khe Sanh flag

A rally was held by the inhabitants of the five districts — Gio Linh, Cam Lo, Hai Lang, Trieu Phong and Huong Hoa — of Quang Binh province together with model units of the three categories of the Liberation armed forces to honour the Cuban visitors.

Premier Fidel Castro arrived greeted by a sea of flags and shouts of "Viet Nam — Cuba — Long live Fidel!" echoed by the mountains.

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Premier Fidel Castro with General Tran Nam Trung, RSVN PRG Minister of Defense

In the DRVN

In the interest of the peoples of the two countries and of the revolutionary cause of the world's people

Premier Fidel Castro with the population of Vinh Linh (17th parallel)

AT the invitation of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, a delegation of the Communist Party of Cuba and the Cuban Revolutionary Government led by Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and Premier of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, has paid an official friendship visit to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. It arrived in Hanoi on September 12 and left there on September 17, 1973.

During its visit to Viet Nam, the delegation of the Communist Party and Revolutionary Government of Cuba laid a wreath at the War Dead Monument, toured Quang Binh province and Vinh Linh area, visited a number of economic, cultural establishments and spots of historic significance and met representatives of the Vietnamese people of various strata.

Wherever it went, the delegation received an extremely warm and cordial welcome from the Vietnamese people, which was a brilliant expression of the militant solidarity and fraternal friendship that has long bound the Vietnamese and Cuban peoples together. The delegation of the Cuban Party and Government expressed its sincere thanks for this reception.

A delegation of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam held talks with the delegation of the Communist Party of Cuba and the Cuban Revolutionary Government on the new developments of the revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese people, on the socialist construction and national defence of the Cuban people, on the further strengthening of the fraternal friendship and cooperation between the two Parties and the two countries and on other problems of mutual concern. Following these talks, a joint statement has been issued which said among other things:

The delegation of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam expressed the warmest sentiments and profound admiration of the Vietnamese people for the heroic people of Cuba.

The Vietnamese people value very highly the historic significance and international importance of the Cuban revolution. With the brilliant victory of the January 1959 Revolution, Cuba freed herself from the neo-colonialist yoke and moved forward on the road of socialism. This is a combination of the protracted struggle against the Spanish colonialists and US imperialists, a combination of the struggle for national liberation and the struggle for class liberation, a combination of the two great revolutionary trends in the present era: the socialist revolution and the movement for national liberation. Cuba, the first country in Latin America to be freed from neo-colonialist domination and the first country in the Western Hemisphere to build socialism has stood proudly and firmly at the gate of US imperialism. This event bears a paramount significance toward the development of the world revolution. The great victories of the Cuban people in fighting and in construction have encouraged the nations in Latin America and in the world to liberate themselves from US neo colonialist domination. The prestige and influence of socialist Cuba have been unceasingly heightened.

The Vietnamese people warmly welcome and highly rejoice over the great achievements recorded by the Cuban people in their economic construction, their defence capabilities and their cultural and social activities. Cuba is the first country in Latin America to have eliminated illiteracy, done away with unemployment and other social evils left by the old society. Under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Revolutionary Government headed by Comrade Fidel Cartro Ruz, the Cuban people are resolved to advance to socialism, work with self-abnegation, strengthen the defence capabilities of their country, vigorously apply modern science and technology, accelerate economic development, and create deep changes as never seen before in the history of Cuba.

The Vietnamese people express their deep admiration for the heroic Cuban people who have constantly upheld the banner of national independence and socialism in Latin America, foiling step by step the policy of aggression, encirclement and blockade of US imperialism aimed at putting down the Cuban revolution. This is a brilliant manifestation of the vigorous and irresistible vitality of the Cuban revolution.

Closely bound to the Cuban people in the struggle against the common ennemy, the Vietnamese people resolutely support the Cuban people's just struggle against the policy of economic blockade of the United States government and demand that the latter dismantle unconditionaliy their military base at Guantanamo, part of Cuba's territory. The Vietnamese people firmly believe that the fraternal Cuban people will obtain many new and yet greater successes in the cause of defending their revolutionary gains, building socialism, developing culture and economy and continuing to enhance their brilliant example of revolutionary heroism in Latin America and the world over.

The delegation of the Communist Party and the Revolutionary Government of Cuba warmly welcomes the Vietnamese people's great victory in the resistance war against US imperialism, for national salvation. The Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam, acknowledged by the International Conference on Viet Nam, has asserted the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights: independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Viet Nam

(Continued on page 8)

SOUTH VIET NAM — ALGERIA JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

THE delegation of the Republic of South Viet Nam led by Lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho, Chairman of the Presidium of the National Front for Liberation Central Committee and of the Advisory Council of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, which paid an official visit to Algeria from September 11 to 14, was received by the state leaders and the people of Algeria in an atmosphere of special cordiality, friendship and fraternal militant solidarity. President Nguyen Huu Tho had a talk with President H. Boumédiène of the Revolutionary Council and of the Council of Ministers of the Algerian Democratic and People's Republic.

The talk took place in an atmosphere of fraternal cordiality and mutual understanding.

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho and President H. Boumédiène expressed their satisfaction on the special character of the time-honored friendship and militant solidarity between the peoples of Algeria and Viet Nam and considered it as a firm basis to develop the relations in all fields between the Algerian Democratic and People's Republic and the Republic of South Viet Nam.

The delegation of the RSVN PRG praised the tradition of heroic struggle of the Algerian people and warmly hailed the glorious achievements recorded by the fraternal Algerian people under the leadership of the Revolutionary Council the National Liberation Front Party and the Government of the Algerian Democratic and People's Republic headed by President H. Boumediène, in the consolidation of their national independence and the construction of their country. The delegation expressed its joy at the successes gained by the Algerian people in their three revolutions on agriculture, industry and culture and the rising role and position of the ADPR on the international arena.

The delegation sincerely wished the brotherly Algerian people new and yet greater successes in all fields and once again expressed the sincere and profound gratitude to President H. Boumédiène, the Revolutionary Council, the National Liberation Front Party, the Government and the fraternal Algerian people for their wholehearted support to the anti-US resistance for national salvation of the South Vietnamese people.

The Algerian side expressed its admiration for the revolutionary heroism of the Vietnamese people and praised the struggle full of sacrifices of the South Vietnamese people against the aggression of the US imperialists and their allies. The Algerian side also welcomed the splendid victories recorded by the South Vietnamese people in the past, under the leadership of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. It considered the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam as a victory of important historic significance of the Vietnamese people and at the same time a victory of all nations and forces struggling for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress all over the world.

The Algerian side hailed the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the DRVN Government for their truthful attitute and goodwill manifested in their respect for and scrupulous implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Joint Communiqué on Viet Nam.

The Algerian side sternly condemned the US and the Saigon administration for violating in a systematic manner important provisions of the Paris Agreement and the Joint Communiqué on Viet Nam and deemed that the US and the Saigon administration deliberately strive to turn South Viet Nam into a new-type colony and military base of the US, prolong the partition of Viet Nam and undermine the efforts for a peaceful settlement of the South Viet Nam problem.

The Algerian side expressed its full support to the correct stand and policy of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam the sole legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people struggling for peace, independence democracy, and national reconciliation and concord.

The Algerian side is convinced that the restoration of a fair and stable peace in Viet Nam is closely linked with the thorough respect and serious implementation of the Paris Agreement and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué on Viet Nam by the US government and the Saigon administration, with the US ending of its military involvement and interference in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam and the Saigon administration's respect of the cease-fire order, release of civilians detained by it, and guarantee of the democratic liberties of the people in the areas under its control.

A close companion-arm of the South Vietnamese people, the Algerian people once again affirm to continue to support and effectively assist the South Vietnamese people in the latter's struggle for the scrupulous implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, in the healing of war wounds and the concentration of efforts to rebuild the whole liberated zone in South Viet Nam.

The Algerian side believed that the South Vietnamese people, under the leadership of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam will foil all the schemes of the reactionary and warlike forces and will finely materialize their great, historic task in the new stage.

The Republic of South Viet Nam and Algerian sides considered that the present situation in the Indochinese peninsula has many important changes favorable to the three Indochinese nations.

The two sides welcomed the great victories recorded by the heroic Cambodian people in their patriotic war of resistance, under the leadership of the National United Front of Kampuchea and the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, headed by Samdech Head of State Norodom Sihanouk.

The two sides resolutely supported the just struggle of the Cambodian people against the US aggressors for a solution to the Cambodian issue on the basis of the five-point Declaration of Samdech Head of State Norodom Sihanouk and the Political Program of the National United Front of Kampuchea, without any foreign interference.

The two sides urgently called on all the peace- and justice-loving nations to recognize the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, the sole legal representative of the Cambodian people.

The two sides are satisfied with the signing of the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos and considered it as a great victory of the heroic Lao people in their struggle for the building of a peaceful, independent, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos.

The two sides hoped that the Vientiane Agreement and its related Protocol will be seriously implemented so as to realize at the earliest day national concord.

The two sides once again affirmed the unconditional support to the Arab people in their struggle to liberate the occupied territories and the Palestine people in their just struggle for the liberation of the invaded Fatherland, and to the struggle for independence and freedom of the peoples of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde and the peoples of Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe...

The two sides also demanded the complete withdrawal of all foreign troops from South Korea and an end to foreign interference in the internal affairs of Korea so as to contribute to the unification of Korea in peace and independence.

The two sides sternly condemned the US imperialists and their henchmen for causing a tragic situation in Chile and expressed their firm confidence that the Chilean people, loyal to their tradition and with the support of all the justice-, freedom- and peace - loving forces, will make the policy of progress and democracy victorious.

The two sides welcomed and highly appreciated the positive achievements of the Fourth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries held in Algiers. The two sides resolutely supported the struggle of the nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America against colonialism, old and new, for independence and freedom.

FIDEL CASTRO ON VISIT TO VIET NAM

(Continued from pages 6-7)

In the liberated zone...

Mr Tran Nam Trung expressed the joy of the South Vietnamese people at welcoming Cuban friends to the liberated zone of South Viet Nam. He pointed out that Cuba had been the first country to recognize the SVN NFL and to send an ambassador to the zone under its control and that Premier Fidel Castro's was the first Party and Government delegation from a friendly country to visit the liberated zone of South Viet Nam. He regarded it as an event of paramount significance and a strong inspiration to the South Vietnamese.

He extolled the strong solidarity and fraternal friendship of the peoples of Viet Nam and Cuba, which, would be further strengthened by Premier Fidel Castro's current visit. The South Vietnamese pledged themselves to do their best to do away with the aftermaths of the war, heighten their vigilance, consolidate peace and force the US and its quislings to strictly implement the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam.

In a warm and moving voice, Premier Fidel Castro expressed his gratification at visiting the liberated areas of South Viet Nam. He praised the struggle for independence and freedom waged by the Viet namese people in the past thirty years.

With great indignation he lashed out at the American imperialists who had for decades interfered in the affairs of Viet Nam and were now helping the Saigon quislings sabotage the Paris Agreement, peace and the reunification of Viet Nam.

"The Cuban Party and Government delegation" the Cuban leader went on "are visiting South Viet Nam on a fine day. In the east the sun is shining on mountains, valleys and ricefields. It reminds me of the future of Viet Nam. It is as resplendent as the sunrays welcoming us this morning."

Immediately after his address he left the platform and mingled with the Liberation fighters. In his army uniform of the same colour as that of our soldiers' and wearing the Dien Bien Phu fighters badge, he looked like one of them. From the hand of a liberation fighter, he took a flag sparkling with decorations and held it high as if he was ready to march with the unit.

A war booty American tank M.48, presented to the guests

The South Vietnamese presented Premier Fidel Castro and the Cuban delegation with many valuable gifts :

The Khe Sanh army unit's was an album of photos showing the progress made by it.

The Quang Tri local armed forces gift consisted of many captured guns: including an AR 15, a quick-firing American Tommy gun, taken by a Quang Tri local unit in a counter-attack against the Saigon task force 147 storming Cua Viet and a vintage carbine of Hai Thuong guerillas, a hero unit which distinguished itself in the battle where a US "mobile cavalry division" was did short work of.

Another hero unit Battalion 8's was its own flag which had witnessed many fierce battles and still bore three bullet holes.

The PRG made a present of an M.48, a big sized American tank captured by the South Viet Nam armed forces in the battle for the liberation of Quang Tri.

On receiving it, Premier Fidel Castro said that the Cuban army would examine its engine and learn from the South Viet Nam liberation fighters their tank-hunting tactics.

The visit of the Cuban Party and Government Delegation to the liberated zone of South Viet Nam ended in a great success. That historic occasion will be always remembered by the South Vietnamese people as a whole, with enthusiasm and emotion.

In the DRVN

and the right to self determination of the South Vietnamese people. Together with the June 13, 1973 Joint Commu i-qué, this Agreement was a manifestation of the victory of historic significance and international importance of the Vietnamese people. This also was a common victory of the peoples of the Indochinese countries, of the socialist countries, of the Non-Aligned countries, and of the peace-and justice-loving people throughout the world.

The delegation of the Party and Government of Cuba deeply rejoiced over the successes recorded by the Vietnamese people in all domains while carrying abroast fighting and production, in the cause of socialist construction in North Viet Nam.

The Cuban people firmly support the Vietnamese people's struggle in the new stage to preserve and consolidate a durable peace, build socialism in the North, achieve independence and democracy in the South, and proceed to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, thus making contributions to the defence of peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world.

The Cuban people and Government firmly support the just stand of the Government of the DRVN as well as of the RSVN PRG to strictly respect and scrupulously implement the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam.

The two sides sternly condemn the United States and the Saigon administration for systematically violating the extremely important provisions of the Paris Agreement concerning the ceasefire, the restoration of peace, the democratic liberties of the people, the return of captured and detained civilian personnel, the achievement of national reconciliation and concord, the obligation of the United States to contribute to the healing of the wounds of war in the DRVN and the activities of the Two-Party JMC and the ICCS.

The two sides resolutely demand that the US and the Saigon administration, end all their violations of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, strictly respect and scrupulously implement all the Articles of the Agreement and the provisions already agreed upon in the Joint Communiqué of June 13, 1973, particularly the provisions on the ceasefire and the return of all captured civilians and the exercise of democratic freedoms. The Cuban side resolutely supports the constructive proposals of the RSVN PRG on June 28, 1973 on the settlement of the internal affairs of South Viet Nam by a peaceful and democratic way in the spirit of national reconciliation and concord and on the basis of the recognition of the existence of two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces in South Viet Nam.

The Cuban side is greatly elated at the ever growing prestige in Viet Nam as well as in the world, of the SVN NFL and the RSVN PRG the sole legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people. It reaffirms its determination to continue developing its relations of militant solidarity with the SVN NFL and the RSVN PRG.

The two sides note with satisfaction that the militant solidarity, mutual support and fraternal cooperation between the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the Communist Party of Cuba, between the Vietnamese and Cuban peoples, are developing splendidly. The two sides express their determination to do their best to constantly enhance and develop the militant solidarity and fraternal cooperation between the Vietnamese and Cuban peoples, in the interest of the peoples of the two countries and of the revolutionary cause of the world's people.

SAI GON

SAIGON is great, not because of its numerous population and vast area.

Saigon is lovable, not because of its ever green canopy, not because nearly everyone of us has relatives and friends there, not because in that luxurious city the visitor can find everything he needs.

Saigon is lovable, first because it has contributed a great deal to national independence and freedom, because its inhabitants always proved themselves unyielding to all tyrannical rulers, especially to all foreign aggressors ; because its people of all ages and walks of life are imbued with a genuine patriotism based on a broad and solid democracy.

The Vietnamese nation had the great honour to trigger the irremediable disintegration of the world colonial system. This privilege was at the same time a great difficulty for the Vietnamese revolution as various imperialists immediately concentrated their forces to wipe it out. It was in Viet Nam that the fierce clash between the world national liberation movement and the world colonial system began ; it was, in Saigon that it started in Viet Nam on September 23, only 28 days after the General Insurrection.

Great Britain, France, Japan hurled their troops into a joint attempt against the revolutionary power. But the Saigonese stood firm. In their hands, bamboo spears turned into lethal weapons ; they resisted the invaders with a firm resolve to win. The war against the French colonialists lasted nine years during which the hand-grenades hurled by the death volunteers kept exploding without interruption in grim battles in the very heart of Saigon. In there engagements, the patriots always found in Saigonese homes a safe haven. The press campaign for unity launched, and the mammoth demonstrations called by a lawyer, Nguyen Huu Tho in Saigon in which hundreds of thousands of people fought for a whole day against French policemen, were spear-heads against the Americans and drove out the visiting flag-showing American warships. Tran Van On was killed, but the school youth movement eventually mounted, just as before it, Thai Van Luong had sacrificed his life for the genuine intellectuals' role in the national liberation movement to be emphatically asserted.

Saigon is heroic. It was so faithful to the Fatherland and the Revolution that it was given the name of President Ho Chi Minh.

Ngo Dinh Diem, conjured out of the "sleeve" of Secretary of State Dulles and tossed into power in Saigon in 1954, represented the interests of the colonialists, feudalists and compradore bourgeois, that is why, though propped up by big amounts of dollars and American weapons, he could not live in in peace in that revolution-ridden city known for its long-standing democratic traditions. His "denounce communists" and "liquidation of communists" campaigns and his roving guilloline" played havoc throughout South Viet Nam. But as patriot Nguyen Trung Truc said "there will always be people to resist the French so long as there remains a blade of grass in the "Plain of Reeds," so long as there are Saigonese, there will always be revolutionaries to fight in Saigon and sparks to ignite the glowing fire of people's war.

Such a turbulent man as Nguyen Khanh had to give way to the heavy pressure of repeated demonstrations and strikes. Thieu and Ky planted execution stakes against a sandbag wall at Ben Thanh market place to intimidate the people into accepting the presence of the US expeditionary forces, but the Saigonese fiercely opposed them, urged them to resign and demanded the pull-out of the GI's : hundreds of thousands of Saigonese took part in six "sleepless nights" and a similar crowd surrounded on April 7, 1966 the offices of Thieu and Ky urging their resignation ; for months on end, Saigon youths burnt American military vehicles: Quach Thi Trang, killed by the enemy, had her statue erected at Bung Binh by school youths ; the widespread movement to protect the national cultural heritage was set on foot in Saigon to counter the corrupted and enslaving culture. Saigon death volunteers made electrifying attacks on the Brink, the Metropole, the Victoria, Tan Son Nhut airbase, the old US Embassy, wiping out hundreds of American aggressors.

Drumhead court martials, tiger cages, Con Son, Chi Hoa, Thu Duc were impotent to break the will of the people who turned their minds to the revolution and resistance : Huynh Tan Mam was the type of the Saigonese students, Mme Ngo Ba Thanh, that of the women, engineer Nguyen Thai Binh that of the intellectuals, who refused to be bought over by riches and honours, and brow-beaten by deportation and prison sentences as they inherited the tradition of indomitableness from Nguyen Van Troi, Thai Van Lung, Minh Khai, Ly Tu Trong.

Saigon has never been a sanctuary for despotic rulers who sit there like on volcano craters, ready to emit a heat of millions of degrees to burn them to ashes.

September 23 — Anniversary of the Nam Bo Resistance

SAIGON in economic straits

AN economic and financial slump is threatening the Nguyen Van Thieu administration.

It is uppermost in the American and Saigon public mind. *AP* Aug. 1 said that while the US was seeking to create the impression that the economy of South Viet Nam under the Thieu regime was a viable one, actually serious disturbances were raging there. At present, the agency added, the economy is facing many difficulties, the living standard down-grading, inflation increasing and concern spreading.

Thieu's economic fix is a reality that the US administration and its Saigon stooges cannot cover up. "Finances are Thieu's main problem" commented *AFP* (April 28). An instrument for achieving US neo-colonialism, his administration has been for many years relying on Washington's aid for survival. After the signing of the Paris Agreement and the subsequent US troops withdrawal, lavish GI spending which supplied a most substantial source of revenue of Thieu's budget have come to an end. The high hopes he pinned on an enormous US aid did not materialize. He received only 325 million dollars instead of 585 million dollars he had asked for the 1972—73 financial year. Out of the 630 million dollars he had begged for the 1973—1974 fiscal year, the American Congress approved no more than 415 million dollars which are still on paper. "After the cease-fire came into effect in Viet Nam," the pro-government paper *Song Than* bitterly complained, "US aid ought to have been more substantial... Six months after that date, however, the US just accepted to grant a 50-million loan... It's the limit!"

Foreign aid to Saigon is now given "by dribblets" while the dollars spent on the spot by American troops are drying up. In early May this year foreign exchange reserves dropped from 148 million dollars to 53 million dollars. US and Saigon economists fear that if the present downward trend continues, those reserves will rapidly vanihs toward the beginning of next year.

At a time when home production is at a low ebb, export insignificant and foreign currency reserves dwindling, Saigon must keep too big a budget to achieve US political and military designs in South Viet Nam. The 1973 budget has upped to about 450 billion piasters of which 286 are earmarked for military expenditures. Therefore Thieu has been doing his best to squeeze the population not to be able however to stave off a deficit. This is expected to reach 155 billion this year against 116 billion in 1972. Inflation must bridge the gap and, according to the paper *Dien Tin*, up to the end of last April, it ran as high as 107 billion. In turn it has led to devaluation and, as a matter of fact, from October 28, 1972 to May 19, 1973, the piaster was devalued six times, from 453 to 500 to a US dollar.

Rice shortage is another problem. As reported by the *Dai Dan Toc* (July 24) the government stocks will run dry in a few months and in one month in the part of Central Viet Nam under Saigon control. "For 40 days the people of South Quang Tri, the *Song Than* (July 19) warned "have not been supplied by the administration; there has been no rice on the market." The *Dien Tin* also reported that for six months now people in Kontum had not been able to buy rice at government-fixed prices; prices hav been spiralling after taxes and the General Supply Department has not issued any rice to the military. Faced with such a drastic shortage, Thieu ordered forced purchases by government agencies, which is not likely to solve the problem owing to poor production, transport difficulties and above all the peasants' resistance. The initially projected tonnage of rice to be imported this year—200,000 tons—has been boosted to 450,000 tons. The fact that the Saigon administration cannot ensure self-sufficiency for the part of South Viet Nam (one of Southeast Asia's major rice producers) under its sway, now that peace has been restored, spells out a heavy political and economic failure for it and its American masters. Serious dearth of foreign currencies, alarming budget deficit, galloping inflation, continued devaluation, gravest rice shortage, such are the outstanding features of the Thieu regime's economy, entirely dependent on the United States, and which used to rely on its large-scale aggression for survival.

Such an economic situation has generated disastrous consequences for the urban population of South Viet Nam.

First and foremost, the latter have to pay exorbitant taxes which are expected to bring in 185 billion piasters in 1973. Tax collectors have been sent all over the country, supported by armymen and polycemen. Heavy fines, even requisition of property, are inflicted on commercial firms, industrial enterprises to pay and schools having failed their taxes.

TVA (added value tax) and other impositions inflation and devaluation of the piaster have sent prices skyrocketing. Saigon's Minister of Economy has admitted that in the first six months of 1973 prices have risen by 20%. Local press reports say that since TVA came into force market prices, especially those of such necessities as rice, sugar, milk, bread, waterlily and medicines have gone up by 30 to 50% as compared with June last year. Consequently the living standard of the townsfolk has notably been lowered.

Full and partial unemployment has sharply upgraded since US troops withdrawal. Saigon papers put the number of jobless at 1.6 million, not including the hundreds of thousands of peasants forced to flee into urban centres in war time. Those who apply for at the 30 newly-established government "employment offices" have to deposit 1,000 piasters each, and more often than not they lose their security. Poverty, illness, mendicity, robbery and plundering are rampant in towns and cities.

The current economic and financial regression is a fiasco of Nixon's "economic Vietnamization" meant to enable the Thieu regime to "share responsibilities" with the US while serving as atool of US neo-colonialism. It bares the deceptiveness of Thieu's much vaunted "self-sufficiency" program and "postwar reconstruction and development" plan.

That regression and the predatory measures enforced by the Saigon administration have aroused indignation among all popular segments in its zone. Factory and office workers, students and vendors, men of letters and religious followers, forced into much straiter circumstances, are militating for tax reduction or exemption, lower prices, more jobs and better living conditions. Tradesmen and industrialists, civil servants, military men, even representatives and senators oppose Thieu's drastic economic measures and fascist taxation.

The actions of the urban population to defend their vital interests assume a great significance. It is linked to the entire people's struggle for peace, independence, democracy, a better living standard and national reconciliation and concord. Whatever his manoeuvres, obstinacy and brutality, Thieu will sink still deeper into the quagmire.

* * *

Here and There

THIEU'S ANTI COMMUNIST CHARGES BOOMERANG

The political prisoners issue continues to be a headache for the Saigon regime.

It is to be recalled that on July 20, it brought out a 46-page pamphlet on its prison regime, with a view to "swinging" universal opinion on the question which it alleged had been "misrepresented by communist propaganda." Explanations, pleas were galore in the booklet which charged the world press with "acting without knowing it as a mouthpiece for a phantom issue", flayed US journalist Don Luce and Representative Anderson for their denunciations of the Con Son "tiger cages" and called them "US liars of national notoriety".

Thus, Thieu and his clique, driven to the wall have hit back by cracking down on the home press, expelling foreign correspondents, publishing "communiqués" and "documents" one after another to deny the existence of political prisoners in South Viet Nam, identifying the declarations of world organizations and personalities demanding their release with "the campaign directed and co-ordinated by international communism" and brazenly defying all men of conscience in the world. They have described all observers having visited South Viet Nam like US Bishop Gumbleton, all the 97 organizations taking part in the Paris International Conference for the Release of Political Prisoners in Viet Nam (April 1973), the Association of Italian Catholic Workers, the Amnesty National, the International Red Cross, Canadian Bishop Belanger, all those who have raised the political detainees' question including Pope Paul VI who referred to it in the April 9, 1973 audience granted to Thieu, as "proponents of a phanton issue", in the service of the communists.

Did it ever occur to the Saigon tyrant that such accusations would only do a disservice to his anti-communist crusade by ascribing to communism so much influence.

MADE IN U.S.A

Among the imperialist countries, the US tends more and more to monopolize a special industry exclusively for export: engineering of counter-revolutionary coups d'etat.

Any research worker will find it easy to draw up a complete list of such "products", either successful or not.

The trade mark *Made in USA*, is not always apparent and often denied officially, particularly in case of failure like the abortive putsch in Vientiane on August 20.

But the Chile coup of September 11, *Reuter* reported, is said by official sources to be known of by Mr Nixon at least 48 hours in advance. The members of the connter-revolutionary junta had been in official or non-official touch with US representatives before the occurrence of the coup. Moreover, Latin American diplomatic circles disclosed that the US Ambassador in Santiago had come back from Washington on the eve of the putsch, that in the US federal capital he had had exchanges of views with Kissinger for a week and that the latter had declared that Latin American was first and foremost on the mind of the US.

All that is enough to substantiate the universal charges against "Allende's assassins, Nixon and Kissinger" and justify the indignation demonstrations against the White House inside the US, during which the latter was denounced as "murderer of Allende and democracy."

"RECIPROCAL" VERBS

The *Los Angeles Times* revealed on August 24 the repeated intrusion ef menbers of the FBI staff into diplomatic and commercial missions' offices of the socialist countries and Japan, in many places in the US. Many ex-agents of that establishment disclosed that in the 50's the headquarters of the US Communist Party were regularly "visited" by its burglars and nearly all the embassies of the socialist countries had been graced at least once with their discreet company and that in the 60's Martin Luther King's office was bugged with the same devices used at Watergate in 1972, on Edgar Hoover's orders.

AFP reported on August 25, 1973 that Kissinger had been asked by Nixon to co-operate with the late FBI boss and the then Attorney General John Mitchell, in the installation of the caves-dropping of many high-ranking officials of the US administration. But, a ccording to the *New York Times*, from 1969 to 1971 the FBI was also instructed by the US Chief Executive to tap the phones of Kissinger, Sullivan, Richard Peterson and Richard Sneidor, members of the special advisor's delegation to the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.

So of all the verbs, "steal" and "spy" seem to be most commonly used in the leading circles of the US and they are so in the past and present tenses and as "reciprocal" verbs at that.

HUONG NAM

On the co-existence of two South Vietnamese administrations

(Continued)

THE SAIGON ADMINISTRATION: A NEO-COLONIALIST INSTRUMENT OF THE U.S.

THE legitimacy of an administration depends mainly on its representativeness, on whether or not it embodies and defends the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the country concerned.

Is illegal any administration that is set up through fraudulent elections or imposed by a foreign country for colonialist or neo-colonialist ends.

The realities in Viet Nam over nearly twenty years have unmistakably shown that the so-called "Republic of Viet Nam" is a creation of the USA which first brought home Ngo Dinh Diem, a mandarin of the Nguyen Dynasty schooled by Cardinal Spellman in an American monastry, to be prime minister of the puppet Bao Dai government before the conclusion of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. Some time after these came into force, the US imperialists ousted the French from the South, brought in thousands of military advisers and personnel along with huge amounts of arms and ammunition and other war means, and reorganized the Saigon army to be from then onward placed apparently under Diem, but actually under the US Military Assistance and Advisory Group. The former doctored a referendum on October 26, 1956 to topple Bao Dai and proclaim a republic. Then, through another faked election he became president of the "state" in complete disregard of the Geneva Agreements.

He was eventually liquidated by his own masters in a "change horse midstream" move at a time when the United States "special war" strategy was in hot waters.

Coups and counter-coups finally put in power Nguyen Van Thieu who is simply an upholder of Diem's cause. Thieu's republic was described by Daniel Ellsberg on May 15, 1970 before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee as "a Diem regime without Diem."

To conceal its true colours, in October 1967, Thieu held an election that his running mate Nguyen Cao Ky himself branded as a "rigged" one in an interview with the West German paper *Stern*.

In 1971, Thieu staged another "presidential election" which was turned into an unusual one-man race since all his contenders from Duong Van Minh to his "collaborator" Nguyen Cao Ky had been disqualified.

A faithful servant of Yankee imperialism, Thieu has exerted every effort to carry out the US "Vietnamization" of the war and the Nixon doctrine. The years of US neo-colonialist domination of which Thieu was a tool, were years of untold horrors. The war was stepped up to unprecedented fierceness: Owing to Thieu's vicious and cruel "pacification" policy, so many families have been separated, so many of our countrymen arbitrarily murdered or incapacitated for life, and hundreds of thousands arrested, detained, ill-treated and tortured. The Thieu regime has turned South Viet Nam into an immense prison. It has most savagely repressed all opposition, all liberal and democratic leanings. Thieu has ruled and continues to rule by fascist laws enacted at the time his rubber-stamp "National Assembly," was forced to grant him full powers. Fascist laws that go on to be decreed like those being enforced are completely at variance with Saigon's own undemocratic Constitution.

The Thieu administration which survives and rules not for the sake of the people and their supreme interests, owes its survival to American weapons and dollars.

Thieu's so-called republic is a neo-colony with less trappings of independence than any of the US neo-colonies, since his administration, ev n at present, is placed under the strict control and direction of a dense advisers' network from top to bottom. Its finance or its "source of life," depends mainly on American aid. Hundreds of taxes imposed on the population are in essence surtaxes on goods imported from the United States.

The Saigon administration sets its face against Independence, Peace, Neutrality and National Concord.

If before the conclusion of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, the most grievous crime of Nguyen Van Thieu was to act as a tool for US Vietnamization of the war in South Viet Nam, and the main executor of the Nixon doctrine in Cambodia and Laos, after its signing, his most serious offense has been to oppose as best as he can all its provisions.

The cease-fire is one of the fundamental stipulations of the accord. Without it, the war cannot be ended nor peace restored; without it, there are no conditions and no basis to implement the other provisions. But up to now, not only have the hostilities not come to an end but they have even been stepped up in some localities. According to still incomplete data, out of 97,720 violations recorded between January 28 and early June, over 20,000 were encroachment operations including 100 at regiment or division strength, and nearly 43,000 police operations. In 42,000 breaches observed after the release of the June 13 Joint Communiqué, 3,700 were landgrabbing actions, over 30,000 were police and "pacification" raids, including 3 large-scale ones on Chuong Thien, Kontum and Binh Long by division-size units supported by armoured vehicles, artillery and aircraft.

The above-mentioned figures spell out US-Saigon dark design to maintain the state of war and carry inroads into the PRG-held areas and consolidate the US neo-colonialist rule. While after the signing of the Joint Communiqué, Kissinger hurriedly called a press conference to say that this document did not bind the US to end its bombing of Cambodia, Schlessinger, US Defence Secretary threatened that the resumption of the bombing of North Viet Nam was not ruled out. On his part, Nguyen Van Thieu trumpeted that "peace can be restored only by force of arms", and "we must strengthen our forces and show our resolve to fight and to defeat communism." Such truculent words and big size operations in no way serve peace; they run completely counter to the letter and spirit of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, the June 13 Joint Communiqué and the Protocol on the cease-fire.

The Paris Agreement stipulates in its Article 8-c that all civilian personnel detained shall be returned. The Protocol on the return of captured military personnel and civilian personnel provides for the two South Vietnamese parties to do their utmost to settle this problem within 90 days after the cease-fire comes into force. The June 13 Joint Communiqué has set a 45 day-deadline.

However, apart from some thousand detainees returned to the PRG of the RSVN in early May and late July 1973 under pressure of public opinion, no more returnees have been handed back so far.

The Thieu administration has flatly denied the existence of political prisoners. But Saigon MP Ho Ngoc Nhuan and Father Chan Tin, in his *White Book* on political prisoners, have commented that the figure of 200,000 political prisoners known in South Viet Nam is "not exaggerated" and regarding this question, the Vietnamese people say "yes" and Nguyen Van Thieu says "no".

It is commonly known that the Thieu administration runs in South Viet Nam 542 prisons (21 big and 521 smaller ones) notorious all over the world for the great number of their inmates and their harsh penitentiary conditions like: Poulo Condor, Chi Hoa, Thu Duc, Phu Quoc, Tan Hiep, Cho Quan, Go Vap. If the secret jails of the US intelligence service and the Saigon army is included, this number run to the thousand.

Of course, these penitentiary establishments detain also common-law prisoners, victims of a rotten regime, who account for only a small part of the total South Viet Nam prison population.

Now, to dodge their return stipulated in the Paris Agreement and Protocols, Nguyen Van Thieu has been trying to put on the political prisoners the common-law offender's label.

Not only has he been procrastinating, but he has been mounting "pacification" and "Phoenix" drives and "police operations," arrests and purges against hundreds of thousands of people, so much so that from the signing of the Paris Agreement to date, there have been tens of thousands of new people thrown in jail. It is thus clear that Thieu not only refuses to return the civilian personne held by him but continues to inflict on them a harsh treatment, and also to put tens of thousands of other people in jail and concentration camps, thereby aggravating the political prisoner issue.

The Thieu administration delaying and wrecking the return of political prisoners is part and parcel of its scheme to maintain the state of war so as to continue its policy of annexation by force of arms, of repression and terror and sowing hatred and division among our people. This increasingly exposes it as a tool of US neo-colonialism, an enemy of independence and freedom and a foe of all the sections of South Vietnamese.

The vicious "pacification" program, born of white terror and fascist repression, is being carried out all over South Viet Nam. Two months only after the cease-fire order came into force, the Saigon administration penned up over 300,000 inhabitants in concentration camps in the Mekong Delta and in the coastal plains of Central Viet Nam.

It has also been actively strengthening its coercive apparatus in towns and countryside and organizing new "shock civil guard" units to quell all mass movements for democratic freedoms and national concord.

Free movement is more stringently restricted than in wartime and freedom of assembly, freedom of organization, freedom of political activities are also banned by the regime which has dissolved or merged into pro-government organizations the parties which did not see eye to eye with it, while coercing people into joining Thieu's "Democratic Party" set up to counter the PRG.

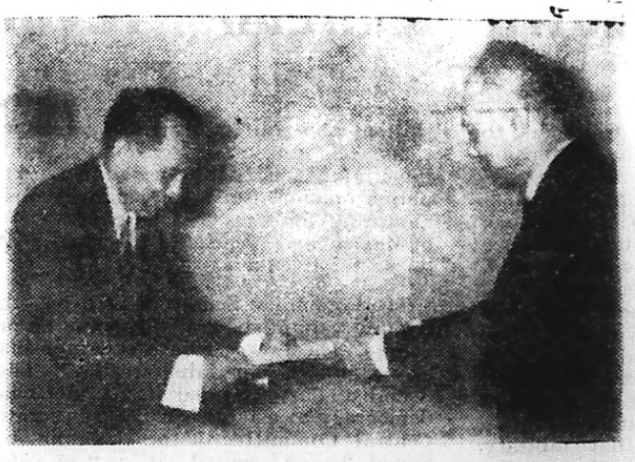
With regard to freedom of opinion and freedom of the press, Thieu has issued a fascist decree like in war time to intimidate, arrest and imprison pressmen and fine, seize and close down newspapers standing for peace and national reconciliation and concord.

He deliberately delayed and hindered the holding of the consultative conference which, under Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, should be convened "immediately after the cease-fire order" by the two South Vietnamese parties who shall do their utmost to reach within 90 days an agreement on the settlement of the South Viet Nam domestic problems; consequently the consultative conference could start only on March 19, 1973 at La Celle Saint Cloud but it has been dragging its feet since.

Whereas the PRG has made sensible and concrete proposals for the settlement of South Viet Nam's domestic problems in a comprehensive manner and suggested concrete steps and priorities, the Saigon administration has submitted a draft "preliminary accord" in which it has listed high on the agenda the general election issue and has gone so far as to put forth a "concrete time-table" for the settlement of the South Viet Nam problem. But the general election mentioned in the Paris Agreement must be "genuinely free and democratic" (Article 9b), that is it should be held only after the cessation of the hostilities by both South Viet Nam sides (Article 10), and achievement of national reconciliation and and concord and enforcement of the people's democratic freedoms (Article 11), while that referred to in the Saigon administration's draft — to be held in the unstable conditions prevailing in the Saigon-controlled areas in which democratic freedoms are abolished and the political forces repressed, victimized, imprisoned — will be but a farce just like the ones staged previously. To ensure the right to self-determination in South Viet Nam by means of such a travesty of democracy would be tantamount to renouncing it, legalizing the Thieu dictatorial regime and eliminating the PRG, an aim which could not be realized by the most atrocious war of aggression. That is why the draft "preliminary accord" of the Saigon administration accompanied by a "schedule" is but a crafty move to sow confusion, divert the attention of the public and delay the settlement of the South Viet Nam problems in order to preserve the Thieu dictatorship.

(To be continued)

HUYNH VAN LY



HEAD OF LPF'S REPRESENTATION PRESENTS CREDENTIALS

On August 17, 1973 Mr Thoong Chan Uspalavan, Head of the Representation of the Lao Patriotic Front to the Republic of South Viet Nam presented his credentials to President Nguyen Huu Tho of the Advisory Council of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam.

Present on this occasion on the Vietnamese side were Foreign Minister Nguyen Thi Binh, Deputy-Foreign Minister Hoang Bich Son, acting Head of the 3rd Department of the Foreign Ministry Nguyen Van Dong and acting Head of the Protocol Department Le Trung Nam.

Signing of Protocol to Vientiane Agreement

A new gain of our Lao brothers

THE signing on Sept- 14 1973 in Vientiane of the Protocol to the Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Achievement of National Concord in Laos was a new achievement of the brotherly Lao people's fight for a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic, unified and prosperous Lao.

As is known to everybody, the February 21, 1973 Vientiane Agreement provided for the formation, within 30 days after the signing of the Agreement, of a new Provisional National Union government and a caretaker National Political Consultation Council. But the ultra-rightist reactionaries in Vientiane did their best to prevent its implementation by hindering the negotiations for the Protocol, by delaying the signing of finalized texts, by staging finally the August 20, 1973 reactionary *coup d'etat*.

It is an open secret that all those attempts received US blessing and the Bangkok reactionary rulers' direct assistance. They were eventually foiled. The Protocol was signed on the basis of the letter and spirit of the Feb. 21, 1973 Agreement and the draft document agreed upon by both sides on July 27, 1973, after seven months' persevering and resolute effort in the teeth of the warlike and reactionary forces' opposition.

Once again the Lao people's fundamental national rights were reasserted in the Protocol. The organs for the achievement of peace and national concord — namely the Provisional National Union Government and the National Political Consultative Council — will be set up. The patriotic forces will be duly represented in them and will take part in the political life of the Kingdom. They will be given more opportunities to contribute to the building of a new Laos, an independent, neutral, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos. The dream of the multinational Lao people.

The event represented also a common success to the three Indochinese peoples who have been sharing weal and woe in their common battle for the emancipation of this peninsula

(Continued on page 12)

LAOS: PROTOCOL TO AGREEMENT ON RESTORING PEACE AND ACHIEVING NATIONAL CONCORD

IN implementation of the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord (signed on Feb. 21st, 1973 in Vientiane), a protocol has just been elaborated in Vientiane between the Vientiane government side and the patriotic forces side.

The Protocol comprises 9 chapters which deals among other things, with the *formation and composition of a Provisional National Union Government and a National Coalition Political Council.*

In implementation of Articles 6 and 7 of the Agreement regarding the formation of a Provisional National Union Government composed of a Prime Minister not included in the equal numbers of the two sides, two vice-premiers, one belonging to the patriotic forces side and charged with a ministry, and the other belonging to the Vientiane Government side and charged with another ministry, and ministers and vice-ministers totalling 25 persons.

The National Coalition Political Council comprises one Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen, standing members and ordinary members totalling 42, including representatives of the two sides and personalities standing for peace, independence, neutrality and democracy and chosen by common agreement of the two sides.

Follows the distribution:

— For the Vientiane Government side: 16 members,

— For the patriotic forces side: 16 members,

— 10 personnalities chosen by common agreement of the two sides.

In execution of Article 1 (d) of the Agreement concerning the full observance of the people's democratic freedoms, the two sides commit themselves:

a) To entrust the Provisional Union Government with abolishing or amending all laws, all regulations as well as all the organizations and organisms contrary to the democratic freedoms of the people stipulated in Article 1 (d) of the Agreement.

b) To entrust the Provisional National Union Government and the National Coalition Political Council with re-examining, revising and amending the laws of 1957 on the people's democratic freedoms to make them conformable to the present realities of the country.

The Provisional National Union Government and the National Coalition Political Council shall jointly organize democratic elections to complete, consolidate and reinforce the State administrative organs of all levels, thus creating favourable conditions for the organization of genuinely free and democratic general election to set up a definitive National Assembly in order to proceed to the realization of national concord and the unification of the country.

In execution of Article 9 of the Agreement, in order to guarantee security and create facilities for the functioning of the Provisional National Union Government and the National Coalition Political Council as well as for the activities of all the functionaries and cadres of the two sides, to create favourable conditions for the implementation of the signed Agreement, and to preserve a durable and definitive peace and national concord, the neutralization of the Royal City of Luang Prabang and Vientiane city will be realized according to the following principles: In the two cities, there must be full guarantee of safety for the activities of the persons of the two sides. The two sides have the joint responsibility of assuring the administration and defence of the two cities so that the administration in the two cities be genuinely neutral, and the two cities be jointly defended by the armed forces of the two sides.

Concerning *the cease-fire*, the Protocol says:

In execution of the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos and with a view to rendering the ceasefire of February 22,1973 really effective, efficacious and definitive throughout the Kingdom, the Commands of the armed forces of the two sides have the obligations to order all the units of regular troops and armed police under the command of their side to respect and implement seriously the ceasefire order and the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos as well as all the provisions of this Protocol.

Chapter VI of the Protocol mentions *the question of withdrawal from Laos of troops and military personnel of foreign countries*:

a) All the troops and military personnel of foreign countries including the disguised military personnel in the embassies and consulates of foreign countries in Laos, except those registered in the personnel of the diplomatic missions recognized by the Provisional National Union Government, must withdraw totally from Laos.

b) The Central Joint Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement will fix the plan for the withdrawal from Laos of troops and military personnel of foreign countries, except those stipulated in the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos. Under this plan, the withdrawal will take place in three phases of 20 days of interval and must be completed at the lastest within 60 days after the formation of the Provisional National Union Government and the National Coalition Political Council.

In execution of Article 4 of the Agreement: The "Special forces" organized, armed, trained and commanded by foreign countries must be totally dissolved, the military bases, positions and installations of these forces must be completely and definitively dismantled.

The Central Joint Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement will fix the plan for the dissolution of the above-mentioned "special forces" and the dismantlement of the military bases, positions and installations of these forces. This plan must be accomplished satisfactorily within the time limit-fixed by the Central Joint Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement.

The Protocol also deals with the *return of military and civilian captured and detained during the war*:

In execution of Article 5 of the Agreement:

The return of all persons without distinction of nationality who were captured and detained for their collaboration with the other side during the war will be carried out in 3 drives and completed at the same time as the withdrawal from Laos of the troops and military personnel of foreign countries.

Regarding the *organization of the implementation of the Agreement, the Supervision and Control and the other provisions*, the Protocol says:

In conformity with Article 11 of the Agreement, the obligation to implement the Agreement and this Protocol rests mainly with Laotians of the two sides. The two sides agree in Vientiane to form a Joint Commission for the implementation of the Agreement at the central level, or Central Joint Commission for short.

In conformity with Article 12 of the Agreement, the International Commission of Control will continue its activities in close relation and cooperation with the Central Joint Commission, in keeping with their function, power and principles of work already defined in the Protocol to the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos.

The International Commission will carry out its duty in the supervision and control of the ceasefire in Laos with the joint approval by the two Lao sides, because the responsibility for the execution of the ceasefire rests with the two Lao sides. The International Control Commission will fulfil its function of supervision and control of the ceasefire in close collaboration with the Central Joint Commission and in the framework of the modalities on the ceasefire already agreed upon by the two sides.

US imperialism and Chilean reaction cannot put down Chilean revolution

Late Chilean President Salvador Allende Gossens

ON the morning of September 11, 1973, a counter-revolutionary coup in Chile overthrew the Popular Unity Coalition Government which came into power after the election of September 1970.

First, the coup-makers consisting of top officers in the Chilean army, occupied Valparaiso port. Then they surrounded and attacked the Presidential Palace with aircraft, tanks, heavy artillery and machineguns. They killed President Salvador Allende, the great leader of the Chilean people and a staunch revolutionary who had won the admiration and respect of the whole world. They proclaimed martial law throughout the country and took a series of fascist measures ; closing the borders, dissolving parliament, ordering the people to stay in and threatened to shoot on sight anyone seen in the streets, searching homes, demolishing the radio stations of the government, ordering a complete black-out on information, and carrying out bloody repression of the progressive forces. Within only to days, thousands of patriotic and progressive Chileans were summarily executed or put in jail. The coup-makers even arrested a number of ministers and provincial governors nominated by the Allende Government. They also opened fire on the Cuban Embassy in Santiago de Chile and attacked the Cuban freighter *Playa Larga* anchored off Valparaiso with a cargo of sugar presented by Cuba to the Chilean people.

On the night of September 12, the coup group declared the formation of the so-called "Government of National Reconstruction" composed of 15 arch reactionaries including 13 generals, admirals and colonels.

The Chilean revolution is facing grave hours and crucial tests. The ultra-rightists in Chile, swayed by the US imperialists, are resorting to counter-revolutionary violence to wipe out the revolutionary forces, establish a pro-American dictatorship and do away with all the revolutionary gains made by the Chilean people during the past three years under President Salvador Allende's Popular Unity Coalition Government. Though the White House may try hard to deny their involvement, their dirty hand in this coup is apparent. It is US imperialism and nobody else that masterminded the September 11 military coup. All along the past three years, it had not ceased supplying arms, money and means to the reactionary rightwing forces in Chile and to instigate the latter to maintain a permanent tension and foment continued political, economic and social trouble with a view to nipping the Chilean revolution in the bud. Shortly before the coup took place, the Chilean press had published irrefutable evidence of US intervention such as instructions of the CIA to its agents in Chile to plot the overthrow of the Allende Government and the formation of a new government (this document was found in the home of a leader of the so-called "Fatherland and Liberty Party"). Reports from Washington have confirmed that the Nixon administration knew at least 48 hours in advance of the Chilean military junta's action. It has also been confirmed that military members of the rebels had been in touch with the representatives, official and non-official, of the US before the event. "These contacts were made only during the week before it and Washington at first expected it to take place on Monday September 10. However it was delayed for one day in order to complete plans with Chile's police units" (*Reuter*, September 12). Four US destroyers were heading for Chile when it happened (*AFP*, September 11). The Italian Catholic weekly *Sette Giorny* disclosed that the CIA had given Frei twenty million dollars in his campaign against the Allende Government. Also to this end, the CIA had beefed up its secret agents in Chile by three times.

Other sources revealed that the US Ambassador in Santiago had returned from Washington on the eve of the coup, after consulting with Kissinger for one week and that the latter had declared that Latin America was at present the main concern of the United States. And right after the putsch, the US imperialists raised the price of Chilean copper which it had lowered, as a move to shore up the Chilean rightists economically.

The coup-makers have been doing their best to give the impression that everything is all right and they have had the situation under control without meeting with any noticeable resistance.

In many places, however, Chilean patriots resisted resolutely with arms in hands. Many resistance pockets were formed in the centre of Santiago the strongest of which was the office of the Ministry of Finance close to the Presidential Palace.

The revolutionary forces there fought with extraordinary courage and held out to the end in spite of frantic air bombing and strafing and violent attacks by the infantry of the rebelling forces. By September 14 in the morning, gunfire continued to be heard in several places and the fighting was moving to the countryside. According to *AFP* on September 13, an armed resistance movement has taken shape in the South. A *CTK* dispatch from Santiago on the same day reported that a mutiny had broken out in the 5th division of the Chilean ground forces stationed at Punta Arenas against the division commander who supported the coup-makers, which is evidence of serious rifts in the Chilean armed forces.

Meanwhile, a wave of protest against the US imperialists and their henchmen for having staged the counter-revolutionary putsch has been sweeping the world.

Mass demonstrations involving tens of thousands of people have been held in many Latin American countries, in Italy, France, Britain, West Germany... Many governments, international and national organizations and political parties have issued condemnations. The murder of President Allende by the US imperialists and their henchmen greatly shocked public opinion. Cuba immediately observed official mourning for President Allende. The governments of Mexico and Venezuela declared that they would do so for five days.

The Colombian Senate pointed out that "US monopoly capitalists are the actual promoter of the coup." The Lower House of Argentina described it as "a brazen imperialist assault." The Venezuelan Socialist Party termed it "a plot against Chilean democracy to establish a fascist dictatorship." The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union scored it as "an offence against Chilean democratic institutions and constitution." The Swedish Prime Minister condemned it as "a challenge against all the forces struggling for democracy."

Public opinion has underscored that this crime of the US imperialists is directed not only against the Chilean people but also the revolutionary government of Peru, the popular government in Argentina, all the nations in the Third World and the peace- and freedom-loving peoples throughout the world. The Nixon administration must bear full responsibility for it.

The Chilean reactionaries, agents of US imperialists, though having seized control of a number of army and police units and caused some losses to the Chilean revolution, have been meeting with strong resistance from the revolutionary forces in the country and vigorous cricitism from the whole progressive mankind. The military coup has brought into bolder relief the aggressive and brutal nature of US imperialism and made all the peoples and the whole progressive mankind redouble their vigilance and strengthen their unity against it. It has also thrown a lurid light on the barbarous and ugly nature of the reactionaries in Chile, henchmen of US imperialism, and stiffened the fighting will of the Chilean revolutionary forces. The evolution of the situation has also shown that in spite of serious difficulties, the Chilean revolution will continue to advance with firmer steps.

A close friend of the Chilean people and their comrade-in-arms in the battle against US imperialism, the South Vietnamese people strongly condemn the September 11 counter-revolutionary military putsch in Chile and reaffirm their militant solidarity with the revolutionary people and total support for their just struggle there against US imperialism and its henchmen, for national independence and freedom. We convey our heartfelt sympathy to the fraternal Chilean people and the bereaved family of President Allende and pay deep respects to him who has laid down his life for Chilean democracy and always shown warm affection and support for us. We are firmly confident that with their long tradition of revolutionary struggle, with their growing revolutionary forces with their ever increasing revolutionary consciousness as well as their abundant experience fighting against US imperialism and home reaction and in opposing revolutionary violence to counter-revolutionary violence, the Chilean people will tide over this tough test. The Chilean revolution will win.

DAI LIEN

A NEW GAIN OF OUR LAO BROTHERS

(*Continued from page 11*)

from the neo-colonialist yoke of US imperialism. It can also be ascribed to the progressive forces all over the world which have been consistently sympathizing with, and supporting, the Lao people's legitimate drive for independence and freedom.

The new gain made by the brotherly Lao people under the leadership of the Lao Patriotic Front, has driven one big step back the US and its Lao clients and contributed to a favorable change of the balance of forces to the Revolution and to make it possible for the revolutionary forces to advance further.

It can be foreseen that US imperialism and its Lao henchmen will resort to every means to impede the implementation of the Vientiane Agreement and its newly-signed Protocol. The progressive forces in Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam will therefore have to carry on their fight, and world opinion will still have to pay special attention to the events in Laos and to give wholehearted support to the Lao people's endeavour to get the Vientiane side to strictly fulfil its pledges. The patriotic forces and the entire people of Laos now have at their disposal an extensive free zone covering 80 percent of the national territory peopled by nearly one half of the total population of Laos, which is a solid stronghold. The Lao patriotic armed forces have been tempered and have grown up rapidly through the liberation war ; they are the most effective guarantee for the realization of peace and national concord. The Lao people have, in the course of a long drawn-out and gruelling fight, succeeded in setting up a monlithic, broad national front embracing all nationalities within Laos, based on the allianc between the Lao Patriotic Front and the Alliance of Patriotic Neutralist Forces. They moreover enjoy the sympathy and strong support of the world peoples, including the American progressives. Such are the important factors of the present victory of the Lao people and their future successes.

On the other hand, the US imperialists, the arch enemy of the entire people of Laos, are facing an unprecedented weakening and an all-round crisis. Their Lao henchmen are becoming more and more estranged from the people on account of their high treason.

If more difficulties are still awaiting the Lao people, their future is however very bright. The South Vietnamese people, sharing their brothers' joy pledge to support with might and main their current struggle until complete victory.

SOUTH VIET NAM CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION